

USSN 09/769,405
Art unit 3679
Examiner J.R. Schiffman

Remarks/Arguments

The claims have been amended to make it more clear that the bore of the rod coupling is hollow.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Holcombe (US 2690934).

The examiner has rejected the claims as being anticipated by Holcombe. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As noted above, the claims have been amended to make it more clear that the bore is hollow, as shown in Applicant's figure. The significance of the bore being hollow is described on page 3, lines 24 to 29 of the application. Threading rods into the ends of the coupling seals the bore, and differential pressure between the exterior of the coating and the bore keeps the coating on the coupling. If the bore were not hollow, no difference in pressure between the inside and the outside of the coupling would be possible. Indeed, there would be no inside to the coupling.

Holcombe, by contrast, clearly requires that the coating material of the cylindrical guides 43 that passes through key slots 44 in the coupling that connect with the axial channel 45 of the coupling flows to the socket ends to provide resilient abutments 46 and 47 for the pins of the adjacent rod sections. These resilient abutments are not "knobs", as the Examiner has mistakenly referred to them, but perform the same function as the blocks 31 of rubber described in col. 3, lines 39 to 58. These blocks abut the pins of the sucker rods so that when the pins are completely engaged within the sockets of the couplings, the blocks are "compressed to provide a resistance to backward turning of the rods and thereby assure sufficiently tight joints to prevent intrusion of the well liquids". The intrusion referred to is not intrusion into the sucker rods or the couplings (which are not hollow in operation, having the blocks 31 and plugs 30) but rather intrusion into the uncoated threads of the pins 21, which are the only parts of the sucker rods that are not coated (col. 3, lines 27-29). Intrusion leads to the condition described at col. 3, lines 32-39, which

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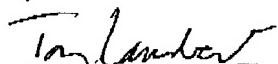
the blocks 31 help to avoid. The resilient abutments 46 and 47 perform the same function, and can only perform that function if the material completely fills the axial channel 45.

In order for a claim to be anticipated by the prior art, every element of the claim must be present in the prior art. Clearly, Holcombe does not have a hollow bore, and in fact, teaches away from keeping the bore hollow. As such, Claims 1 and 7 are not anticipated. Since the remaining claims depend on Claims 1 and 7, which are acceptable, they should be acceptable as well, and the rejection of all the claims should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of the application, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted, signed and certified as being faxed to the USPTO (5 pages) on:

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